Novelization of the fan film
Written by skull902

INTRODUCTION

Hello! I'm skull902, the author of this fanfic you're about to read. It's a novel-style adaptation of my sprite-based parody fan film, "Sonic: Clone Calamity".

As a heads-up, there *will* be differences between the movie and the fanfic version. Since I'm primarily a YouTube creator and the movie calls back so much to previous other sprite skits I've done, I'll be scaling back the references just a bit so that this version of the story flows a little better to those new to my work, especially since it's being published on a different platform.

On a more important note, this novelization of the movie was a donation tier during my Extra Life Game Day event in 2023. I'd like to thank everyone who donated during the event; your contributions went toward helping kids in need, and it's my honor to be able to do this as a token of gratitude for getting us to where we got.

CHAPTER 1: THE DOCTOR'S PLAN

Within the confines of his newest evil lair, the nefarious Dr. Ivo Robotnik, better known as "Eggman", sat in his chair, deep in thought, as well as frustration.

"It's been too long..." he said to himself, lamenting his recent lack of ideas. "Like when's the last time I had a *truly* evil plot to take over the world? It's all such a blur; I always end up beaten down, or flung into the air, plucking hedgehog quills out of my ass, whatever the plan, it always ends up the same way: defeated. Sonic and his pals have their happy little celebration while I stew here, sent back to the drawing board".

The evil scientist took a few steps toward his computer trying to think of something, *anything* that might possibly turn things around for him.

Again speaking outwardly with only himself to hear, he continued "I could make another robot, but- gah! I just don't know what I wanna build..." He slumped forward over the controls, a feeling of self-doubt overcoming him. "Oh, what'll it matter, anyhow? Sonic's got the skills to beat any machine I make no matter wha-" but then it hit him, the new idea that would surely drive his nemeses to a permanent defeat. With growing excitement, Eggman stated "Wait...yes, that's it! If I can't make a machine to kill Sonic, I'll have *Sonic* kill *himself*!" A boisterous evil laugh followed, but only briefly as he soon noted "Oh, hold on, that sounds *really* bad out of context; gonna have to word that better next time..."

A few moments later, the doctor shrugged and resumed his maniacal laughter. His plan was now set into motion.

CHAPTER 2: CLONES

Angel Island, a floating landmass and home to Knuckles the Echidna. The resting place of the Master Emerald, which controls the powers of the Chaos Emeralds. Indeed, a most important jewel that has been guarded by this lone noble warrior for as long as he could remember, a job he took very seriously.

"Ahh, it sure is the life here on Angel Island" the red echidna stated to himself. Recounting its natural wonders, he continued "The beautiful plants, fresh air, lovely view of the ocean, and I get to have it all to myself..." before the reality of his situation sunk in.

"Alone...in complete isolation...man, I need to see my friends more..." he noted.

He heard a voice call "Well at least you have me, Knuckles!", turning

to look at that powerful gem he had come to know the ins and outs of through his years. In his desperation for companionship, he had poorly fashioned a couple googly-eyes to its front.
Knuckles replied to the inanimate object "Yeah, but I'm still trying to figure out whether the voice I keep hearing from you is a figment of my imagination or not".
Before this strange act could continue, another voice rang in. "Oh hey there, Knucklehead!" called Dr. Eggman, walking into the echidna's view.
"Eggman!" Knuckles sprung up before asking "Are you here to be my friend?" with genuine curiosity.
The evil scientist then clarified his intent. "No, I'm not here to fool you for the eight millionth time. Just stand still one moment".
Instantly, from his Eggmobile, the doctor zapped Knuckles with a red laser.
Aside from the momentary shock and surprise, Knuckles didn't seem any worse for wear. He picked himself up and demanded to know "Eggman, what did you just-" before seeing what had suddenly formed in front of him. Blown away, the red echidna could only remark "No way..." in response.

Later, on the beach during a bright, sunny day, Team Dark had met up for some quality time.
"So Shadow, do you think after this, we could hit up the skate park?" asked E-123 Omega.
Rouge the Bat curiously responded with a question of her own. "What is it with your newfound skating obsession?"
The robot then explained "You both know I'm the best grinder of the group".
"Aaaand that's a sentence you definitely could've worded

differently" pointed out Shadow the Hedgehog. He went on to say "But I dunno about that, Omega; it's been pretty hard to have these get-togethers. Can't risk being seen by the public..."
"Shadow, we're on the beach" Rouge flatly stated.
Shadow defensively replied "Oh yeah? Well...shuddup".
The minor squabble was soon interrupted by Dr. Eggman, fresh off his trip to Angel Island. "Am I interrupting something?" he asked with an evil chuckle.
As if to cover something up, Shadow told him "Uuuhh...definitely not us three hanging out; we'd totally never do that".
Rouge followed suit. "Oh yeah, we hate each other a lot, don't we?" she asked the other two.
"Yeah, exactly" Shadow said back to her.
Omega added "Other unconvincing lie" to aid their ruse.
"Yeah, I don't care," Eggman responded to the group, having not fallen for the attempted trickery, "I'm just here to give you this little surprise!" Just as he did to Knuckles, he shot a red beam Shadow's way, sending him to the ground, though otherwise uninjured.
Rouge stood up for her friend as she checked up on him. "You're gonna be sorry you did that, Eggman!" she threatened.
Omega then pointed in the doctor's direction, asking "What's that over there?"
The three then saw what appeared in front of the Eggmobile.
Absolutely floored, Shadow stated "It couldn't be..."

Sonic the Hedgehog watched over a vast field by the seaside, seemingly reflecting as he gazed upon the blades of grass softly flowing in the wind. There, he was visited by a friend.
"Hey, Sonic!"
The blue hedgehog turned around to see Amy Rose, the longest-

tenured of his buddies. Delighted to see her, he smiled and greeted her with a wave. "Oh, hi Ames" he said.

"How are you?" the girl asked, giving off her usual friendly demeanor.

Sonic took a relaxed position as he replied "Oh, I've just been thinking". When asked what about, he further explained. "It's been a little while now since the last time the world's needed saving. And I never really thought about it before, but..." the boy looked around at the lovely natural scene surrounding them both, looking back to her and finishing his thought, "I kinda like the downtime".

Curious, Amy followed up with another question. "Didn't you always? That's when things are at peace, after all".

The hedgehog boy then clarified, telling her "Well yeah, in that way, I've always liked it. But this whole thing has given me some new perspective. I used to get so riled up and everything when there was no butt to be kicked. But once there was some real decent amount of time to go do it, and I started being able to hang out with you guys a little more regularly...I feel like I know you all on a deeper level, became closer as friends. And I really appreciate that".

Amy was taken aback, but in a good way. Sonic had the capacity to use his words wisely and reflect when he needed to, but she'd never recalled a moment it sounded so personal and genuine. She couldn't help but find it charming. "Sonic, that's so sweet" she remarked, her facial expression showing her true appreciation. "You know *I* sure don't mind the opportunity to bond" she joked about the crush she had on him, following that with a nervous little laugh.

Before he could come up with a witty quip of his own and still intrigued by what he said, she quickly got back on track by asking "Uh, a- anyway, when did you begin to feel that way?"

"On the plane ride back from our little adventure on the Starfall

Islands" Sonic recalled. "I had a lotta personal talks with you guys there, really got me thinking".

"Oh wow" the pink hedgehog replied, surprised she hadn't noticed at the time. "Well, you did a good job picking me up that day, I'm sure the others thought so too, and...I'm glad it had a positive effect on you".

The boy chuckled. "Well y'know," he said, "I wouldn't have been able to get to this point without having a wonderful frien-"

"I always thought you two were a bit cheesy". Dr. Eggman appeared before the two, riding in his Eggmobile.

"Eggman!" Sonic exclaimed, not at all thrilled with the scientist showing up.

Amy asked the man "What do you want?" in a derisive tone.

Eggman grinned as he began giving his answer. "Funny you should ask. Much like you, Amy, I actually want Sonic. But for a different reason".

Looking ever-so-relieved, the blue hedgehog replied "Oh! Okay, you had me worried for a second".

"Oh *god*, no! Mind out of gutter, please and thank you" the doctor told him, unenthused with that idea. He further expounded "I need you for a little 'experiment' I'm running".

Confident, Sonic responded "Okay, but you gotta catch me first!" in a mocking manner. The Blue Blur began to run around the field, really toying with Eggman as the latter tried to fire that same red beam at him as he did with Knuckles and Shadow, taunting "Nope!" and "Missed me!" as his nemesis failed to strike. After a third misfire, the blue boy sarcastically asked "Can't you aim any better?"

"Well sure I can..." the fat man retorted in a sinister manner, swiftly turning toward Amy and directing his laser right at her.

This action took the hedgehog girl by surprise; it looked to her like

his focus and frustration were purely on Sonic, and had mistakenly let her guard down because of it. She froze, gasping as she hadn't an idea of what was about to come.

"Amy!" Sonic called out, running into the laser's path before it could hit his friend, falling down in front of her after the strike.

Eggman laughed, saying "Ha! Fool! I knew you'd fall for that one! Or one of the others I had in mind in case that missed!"

Amy, worried for Sonic's condition, immediately went to check up on him. Helping him stand, she asked "Sonic! Are you alright?" in concern.

"I think so..." the blue one replied as he got up to his feet. He didn't feel much from it, thinking it would've hurt more, which left him confused.

"Well you won't be for long, because I'd like to introduce you to my new partners in crime..." said the mad scientist. "Meet the new clones I've created!" Shortly thereafter, three figures stepped up in front of Eggman, facing the other two.

The hedgehogs were shocked to see copies of Knuckles, Shadow, and Sonic standing before them. "Clones?!" Amy remarked.

Sonic questioned "But...how?"

Eggman then told the pair the story. "I thought for some time that I'd have to create a machine to beat you, but then I figured why not just have a Sonic all my own? And give him some buddies, too; this kind of thing works really well in threes, you see" he pointed out. He further explained, "But to do that I still needed to make the cloning device, which I did using samples of Knuckles, Shadow, and your DNA from previous experiences. Seriously, you guys SHED".

"If they're clones of Sonic, Shadow, and Knuckles, how are they evil?" asked the pink girl.

"Oh, I just needed to add a little bit of Make Them Evil Juice to the

DNA samples; works like a charm" the doctor said to her. Noting their only visual difference, he added "The only thing is that it makes them greyscale".

Amy responded "I knew they should've banned that stuff when they had the chance..."

The clone of Sonic then spoke up. He looked right at the original and asked "What's the matter, Sonic? You look like you just saw your own ghost!" in an arrogant, mocking fashion.

Sounding equally-sarcastic, Eggman stated "Well I'd love to keep this conversation going, BUT I have a world to take over. Toodles!"

He and the three clones then quickly left to carry out his plan.

Sonic shouted "Wait!" as he tried to chase after them, hunching over in pain shortly thereafter.

Amy ran up to him. "Sonic, you're hurt. We should go see Tails; he'll be able to figure out what's wrong" she suggested.

"Good idea" the blue hedgehog acknowledged. Getting himself together, he told her "Let's go" before they both went on their way.

CHAPTER 3: TIME IS OF THE ESSENCE

The laboratory of Miles "Tails" Prower was an impressive place, especially for someone so young to have built. Among all the staggering inventions, bells, and whistles that it beheld, Sonic and Amy entered with a sense of urgency.

"Tails!" the pink girl called. "Tails, we need you!"

A burning question then entered Sonic's mind. "Technically speaking, did we just break in?" he asked.

He was left with no time to continue wondering about that, however, as their friend walked in to greet them. "Oh hey, guys. Sorry I wasn't at the door-" Tails interrupted himself upon seeing Sonic, who looked a little rough. "What happened to you?"

"Eggman shot me with some kind of weird cloning beam. Since then I've started feeling weaker" explained Sonic.
The two-tailed fox then inquired "He cloned you?", surprise coming through in his voice.
"Yeah" Amy answered. She continued "There's some evil copy of him roaming around now and we might be in serious trouble if we can't get Sonic some help".
Always one to play it off, the blue boy lightheartedly asked "So that's been my day; how are you, Tails?"
"Well, I've been doing a little studying lately on the multiverse" Tails replied.
Sonic became curious. "Multiverse?"
The young fox nodded. "Yeah, the idea that there are an infinite amount of realities different from our own. I think I'm close to a breakthrough" he beamed.
"That sure sounds important" noted the Blue Blur.
Getting the boys back on track, Amy retorted "Much like getting you some help". With concern, she asked "Can you have a look at him, Tails?"
"Absolutely. Step in here, Sonic". The boy genius turned to show the others a pod with an open lid, which could be used to run diagnostics.
"That won't hurt, will it?" the blue one asked.
Assuringly, Tails stated "Nope! Just step on in and it'll show you the delightful sights and sounds of the Soothing Channel, available only on Satellite TV".
"Tails, I'm not getting a subscription" Sonic flatly stated. From the sounds of it, they'd had this same conversation before.
Sounding disappointed, the yellow fox replied "But if I successfully recommend a friend, I'll get 10% off my next bill..."

"Just run the test" the hedgehog boy impatiently stated before jumping into the pod, lid lowering over him as the test began.
Tails folded his arms as he turned to Amy and asked "So, evil clones, huh?"
"That's right; he got Shadow and Knuckles too" the pink hedgehog recalled.
Tapping his chin, the fox said "Interesting he's trying to use their powers against us this time around" before turning his attention to her once again. "Say, were the clones grey by any chance?" When Amy answered in the positive, he posited "Make Them Evil Juice. I knew they should've banned that stuff..."
Amy sighed, leading Tails to ask her what was wrong. She looked at the boy with a sense of concern clear on her face as she explained "After they were going back-and-forth amongst themselves, Eggman turned the laser on me. Sonic got zapped protecting me and...I dunno, I feel like this is all my fault..."
"Amy..." Sympathetically, Tails addressed her concerns, telling her "You know Sonic wouldn't blame you for that".
"I know," the pink one responded, feeling a sense of guilt, "but I should've just moved out of the way myself..."
Familiar with the same feelings she was going through, the yellow fox reminded her "It's easy to look back on that sort of thing in hindsight. I can understand why you would've froze with the laser suddenly pointed at you". Encouragingly, he added "And Sonic definitely would put himself in front of you again if he had to do it over".
The kind words were definitely of some help to the hedgehog girl, even if she couldn't fully dismiss her feelings of insecurity. "Thanks, Tails. I'll try to keep it in mind..." she told him in appreciation.
"No prob" Tails smiled. Their attention was broken by a beeping

noise coming from the pod. "Oh, time's up" he noticed. "Let's get him outta there..."
Sonic, immediately upon stepping out of the pod, stated "You know damn well that was an ad for your provider, Tails".
"Just give it a shot!" Tails pleaded.
The blue hedgehog, irritated, replied "I DON'T EVEN HAVE A HOUSE".
"The results?" Amy reminded them both.
"Right" the fox then moved over to a screen showing Sonic's data. "Your energy is slowly being drained. There's no doubt in my mind that Eggman's somehow funneling the energy from you to the clone".
Sonic's eyes widened. "So if he takes all of my energy..."
"You're done for" Tails confirmed.
The pink hedgehog gave an "Oh no..." at the revelation, the feeling of guilt increasing.
"If he needs Sonic's energy, the clone might not be fully formed," the fox boy speculated, "so if we can stop him from completely draining you, I think you'll be on even ground".
The blue hedgehog then thought of one way to do it. "The Chaos Emeralds should be able to give me a boost" he stated.
"But do we have the time to go looking for them?" asked Amy.
Cautiously, Tails answered "At the rate the energy drain is going, we'll have to be fast". It was clear he believed in the plan, however, optimistically adding "But so long as we've got at least one emerald, that should buy us all the time we need".
The blue one suggested "We should try to get the rest, too, so that they don't have an edge on us".
"Agreed" the young fox said, continuing "I'll grab my radar and the parts to build a scanner into my pocket computer so we can run

tests on the go" as he thought up his plan. "Better back up my research on there, too, come to think of it".
Sonic gave his best friend a thumbs-up. "Sounds like a plan". When Tails left to get prepared, the blue hedgehog turned to Amy, noticing her looking a bit distracted. "You okay?" he asked.
Popping up to look back at him, the pink girl responded "Oh, yeah, I'm fine. Just thinking, is all", pretending to be unworried.
Excited for the challenge ahead, the blue boy told her "Well I hope one of the things on your mind is having a little fun, 'cause it looks like we're about to go on another adventure" in an upbeat tone.
With a big grin and pointing toward the door with his thumb, he added "Meet you outside!" before exiting the lab in a dash.
Amy was amazed by Sonic's ability to make a positive of the whole situation. Anxiously, she quietly said "Oh, Sonic, I hope we aren't too late..." before following him.

At the same time, Team Dark had Omega run a test on Shadow, coming to the same conclusions.
"Until the energy transfer finishes, the clone is incomplete. Upon completion, Shadow will die. Stopping the transfer before that happens ensures the easiest victory. Until then, we must find an alternate energy source to keep Shadow alive" the robot explained.
Rouge shifted position, putting a hand to her hip. "You think the Chaos Emeralds would do it?"
"Just what I was thinking" Shadow answered, seeing it as the only way. "There's no time to waste; let's roll".

On Angel Island, Knuckles wasn't doing so well after his encounter with Eggman.
"Ugh...why do I feel so funny...?" the red echidna asked in

discomfort.
He then heard the Master Emerald say "Don't worry, Knuckles! I'll take good care of you!"
Knuckles agreed, noting "Well, I do suddenly feel much better when I'm close to you, so, good idea" before he made himself comfortable by huddling near the gem.

In Eggman's base, the evil doctor was talking with the clones.
"Hey Doctor," said Clone Sonic, "I've been meaning to ask. What's the plan here? I don't see how we're gonna take over the world just sitting on our asses like this".
The mad scientist looked at the hedgehog unamused, sarcastically stating "Just as impatient as the original, I see". Knowing that he had to put the next phase of his plan into action, he divulged. "But some explanation won't hurt. By now, Sonic and his friends have probably sprung up a plan of their own to try and stop me. What I want you three to do is go and spy on them, see what they're up to, and relay the information to me".
"A marvellous plan indeed, my good man. I do quite love some nice old-fashioned espionage" Clone Knuckles complimented, sounding like a snooty upper-class gentleman.
With the presence of an over-dramatic thespian, Clone Shadow declared "A great feeling of despair and disgrace shall falleth upon our enemies once we've concocted our plan; the same painful feelings I live with each passing moment..."
Eggman, running thin on patience, said "Uh-huh, sure, now get out there already!", pointing toward the door. As the clones started moving out, he interrupted their exit to give them some advice.
"Also remember to call me every hour, pack clean underwear, and I love you *very* much".

"Dad..." the clones whined.

CHAPTER 4: THE FASTEST

Sonic, Amy, and Tails had just started their adventure when they came upon some promising news.

"Is it close by, Tails?" the blue hedgehog asked.

Tails confidently answered "Yup", adding "according to the radar, the emerald's even moving toward us".

Very soon afterward, the trio were met by three birds; one looking at directly at them with a disapproving scowl, one seemingly not paying much attention, and the other off in his own little world.

"So we finally meet, Sonic the Hedgehog..." said the scowling bird, a green hawk with a voice very rough on the ears.

Sonic was a tad confused, asking "Aaaand who are you?"

"Don't you know?" the green one screeched. "I'm Jet the Hawk, leader of the Babylon Rouges! Fastest being on Earth!"

Amy then pointed something out. "If you're the fastest, then how come we've never heard of you?"

With her Valley Girl accent, the previously-inattentive Wave the Sallow answered "Because like, he's totally not actually the fastest", looking embarrassed to know him as she did so.

"Wave, I told you to back me up and make me look cool!" Jet frustratedly said to his alleged friend.

The purple bird rolled her eyes and replied "Like, whatever...he's cool or something..."

Finally, Storm the Albatross' brain functioned just enough for him to conjure a sentence. "I like potatoes!" he opined.

"Good for you, man" the blue hedgehog encouraged him.

Quickly losing his patience, the fox boy asked "Any particular reason you're wasting our time?"

Amy added "We've got important stuff going on".
Happy to be given the most attention he had been afforded in his life, the hawk explained "Why, yes! I'm not too keen on you taking all the glory, supposed 'fastest thing alive', and I'm here to challenge you to see who the fastest truly is!"
Sonic clearly wasn't interested, saying "Sorry, but I really don't have time for your bullshi-"
"The winner gets this Chaos Emerald!" Jet grated on everyone's eardrums, presenting the red emerald.
The hedgehog boy responded, clearly interested. "Turns out I immediately have an opening for some bullshit".
"Well good!" the green bird annoyingly said, further adding "It took a lot of hard work to steal it from that orphanage. Now then, the rules are-" before he was swiftly punched in the face by Sonic, knocked onto the ground.
"Oh gee, guess you weren't fast enough" the blue one mockingly told him, taking hold of the emerald.
Tails was relieved. "Thank god, that guy almost made me okay with murder" he said.
Turning her attention to Sonic, the pink girl asked him how he felt now that he had the emerald.
"Better already" Sonic answered. "That's one down; can you get a lock on the next one, Tails?"
The boy genius replied "Already on it. The radar's telling me we should go that way", pointing in the right direction.
"And we're off!" exclaimed the blue hedgehog, the three heroes hurrying to their next destination.
Jet, delirious after being knocked silly, loudly belted out "CORN!"
"God Jet, you're like, such a loser" Wave pointed out, adding an unnecessary "...Like" for emphasis.

Storm then noticed "Hey...that guy punched him!"
Done with all the shenanigans, the purple swallow said "Whatever. Let's just go back home already".

Nearby, Clone Knuckles had been watching the whole thing. He noted "Chaos Emeralds, eh? Wait until Dr. Eggman receives news of this development", running off to go tell his creator the news.
Not long after, Big the Cat walked into the area. Looking at his longtime amphibian pal Froggy, the purple cat said "I think we're lost, Froggy. This doesn't look like Frogapalooza at all..."

CHAPTER 5: A LOVELY PICNIC

Huddling behind the natural surroundings of a grassy area, Team Dark were discussing their plan of action after following the trail of a Chaos Emerald.
Shadow asked "Anything, Omega?"
"Chaos Emerald detected. Three individuals spotted as well" the machine replied.
Rouge, acting on the side of caution, advised "This could get dangerous. Be on high alert and take things very carefully".
"Agreed," the black hedgehog nodded, "let's try to slip in and out undetected".

Meanwhile, the rabbits, Cream and her mother Vanilla were having lunch along with their pet Chao, Cheese, the green emerald serving as the centerpiece of their picnic.
Taking the last sip of her tea, the younger bunny said "Thank you for the lovely picnic, momma", happy to be sharing in this developmentally-important time of bonding.
Just then, with the subtlety of a sledgehammer to the teeth, Team

Dark entered the scene. Shadow yelled "Official GUN business, get on the ground!" before the group realized the lack of threat they were facing. He could only say "...Oh" in his ensuing embarrassment.

Rouge, feeling equally-embarrassed, stated "This sure isn't what we were expecting..."

Cream raised a finger. "If I may..." she started.

"Go ahead" Omega told her.

"You guys better have a good explanation for this" the little rabbit said bluntly, threatening "Because I *will* send Cheese after you and once he hits, you've got a snowball's chance in Hell of making it out alive".

Vanilla was unamused. "How dare the three of you rudely barge in on our picnic like that!"

"You're taking this better than I thought you would" commented Shadow. Regretfully, he explained "Look, I'm sorry. We were just looking for your Chaos Emerald, and..."

"Well if you wanted it, you should've asked for it nicely," the older rabbit told the three, "now try again".

Rouge and Shadow hanging their heads, the latter responded "Yes, ma'am" before the team walked off and then re-approached the bunnies. Sounding far more polite, the black hedgehog proposed "Excuse me, but I need that Chaos Emerald or else I'll die. Could we please have it?"

Satisfied with their correction, Vanilla told them "That's much better. Yes, you may have it".

"And watch it next time!" Cream added.

Watching from afar, Clone Shadow eagerly awaited the next encounter with his rivals. "Celebrate your small victories where you

can, my foes, for we shall claim the ultimate triumph over thee!" he exclaimed, bothering the members of a family cookout he happened to be scheming close to.

"'Ey you, shuddup! I'm tryin' to enjoy my barbeque!" one of the party-goers called out.

Turning his attention to the group, the evil clone replied "I believe, sir, it is you who should be shutting of the up!"

"You wanna say that to my face, tough guy?" challenged the other man.

Scared of getting his ass beat, and wanting to report to Dr. Eggman, Clone Shadow sheepishly said "...No" to him before scurrying away.

CHAPTER 6: SONIC VS THE KAREN

"Can you believe them, Drippy?" a frustrated Surge the Tenrec asked, gripping the blue Chaos Emerald tightly. "Refusing to let me buy anything with this stupid emerald and asking me to leave the store...don't they know who I am?!"

"I- I think that's part of why we got kicked out, ma'am..." her ever-so-loyal friend Kitsunami the Fennec nervously answered.

His words reminding her that she could easily just wipe the store off the face of the Earth, the green girl suggested "Actually yeah, let's go back there and-"

"Hi Surge!" Amy called as she, Sonic, and Tails approached them.

Surge waved to the pink hedgehog, greeting her with a "Wuddup, Ames?", adding "Also, fuck you two" as she flipped Sonic and Tails off.

"Still bitter about our encounter at Target, eh?" the blue hedgehog sarcastically replied.

"That spot in line was MINE and YOU KNOW IT" the tenrec angrily retorted. "Them banning me for it was such bullshit!"

The fennec fox pointed out "Well ma'am, u- um, you did shock the manager..."
"And what do we say about managers...?" Surge sternly asked her friend.
Twiddling his thumbs and looking at the ground, Kit replied "'I- if they talk to you, they deserve it'..." timidly.
"Good!" the green girl grinned. Turning back to the three heroes, she followed up by asking "Now what the hell do you want?"
"I'm gonna give it to you straight," Sonic told her, "Eggman's draining energy from me, Knuckles, and Shadow, and we need the Chaos Emeralds to live".
The tenrec's eyes shined with delight at the thought of Sonic's impending demise. She started walking off, dragging Kit along with her. "So as I was saying, Drippy, let's go back there and-"
Using his intellect, Tails thought of the perfect way to get the emerald. "Don't you wanna do it yourself?"
Surge sharply turned around. "Saywhatnow?"
Following the fox boy's lead, Sonic smugly added "Yeah! Won't it piss you off if you *weren't* the one responsible for my death? I mean, with all that hate for me you have, it'd probably be *so* painful to know you failed to kill me~".
The green tenrec knew he was right, and wasn't happy about it.
"Alright, you son of a bitch, you win *this* time..." she told him, forcefully placing the emerald in his hand.
The blue boy teased "Thanks! I'm glad you could see things my way".
"Come on, Drippy" Surge angrily said as she began stomping away. "I'm gonna go find someone's food to spit in..."
Kit told the other three "I, um...s- sorry..." before hurrying after his friend.

"No worries! Seeya guys later!" Amy assured him in a friendly manner.
Tails then turned to his best friend and asked "So, what next, Sonic?"
"Well, there are clones of Knuckles and Shadow going around, too," Sonic answered, "so it stands to reason they're also being drained. We're pretty close to Angel Island; let's swing by, give Knuckles the emerald, and have him join us to look for Shadow".
The boy genius gave him a thumbs-up, saying "Roger that. Setting a course for Angel Island!", the group heading off.

Clone Sonic saw everything, radioing his master. "Doctor, I overheard their plan".
"Good," Eggman replied, "report back to the base; let me know what those plans are and we'll go from there".
With a "Yes, sir", the grey hedgehog clone started making his way back to the scientist's lair.

CHAPTER 7: CONVERGENCE

Knuckles' groans grew louder as he found his situation worsening. "This sucks..." he complained.
He then heard the Master Emerald say "I thought you liked our time together..."
"It's not that, Emmy," the red echidna assured his gem, "it's that I start feeling woozy every time I step away from you...which is bad because I'm starting to get *really* hungry".
"You're sure it's not me?" he heard the green jewel ask.
In response, Knuckles told it "Of course not. I've really enjoyed your company". With a smirk, the red one added "In fact, just to show you I'm not kidding..." before kissing the Master Emerald,

slobbering its front in romantic bliss.
This, of course, was noticed by his friends that had entered the room. "Again, huh?" snarked Sonic.
"AAA! Sonic! Stop barging in like that!" Knuckles defensively shouted, eliciting laughter from Tails and Amy. They had clearly caught him in the act before. Pouting, he asked them "What are you guys here for, anyway?"
The blue hedgehog put a sly smile on his face. "Not to interrupt the makeout sesh or anything..."
"Get to the point, Sonic..."
"You remember Eggman cloning you?" asked the blue one.
Knuckles was surprised, questioning "How'd you know about that?"
Sonic answered "He got me and Shadow, too" as he took a neutral position.
Tails further explained. "The clones are siphoning energy from you all and won't stop until you're completely drained".
Suddenly, it all made sense to the echidna. "So *that's* why I've been feeling awful lately..." he commented. "Well, aside from when I'm close to the Master Emerald".
"That's the reason we've been collecting the Chaos Emeralds; Sonic's been using one as fuel to keep him going" Amy told him.
Placing the emerald they'd gotten from Surge in his hand, she said "Here's one for you to do the same".
This lifted Knuckles' spirits. He exclaimed "Sweet! Now I'm free to roam as I please!"
"Yeah, you should start to feel better real soon" Sonic informed him.
The echidna boy thanked the others, to which Amy replied "Anything to help a friend!"
Sonic then laid out the plan. "We're gonna try to find Shadow since he was also cloned and then get back to the emerald hunt. You

wanna come along?" he asked.
"I think Eggman deserves some payback for this little stunt of his. You can count me in" the red one told them emphatically.
Something was pressing on his mind, however. "But first, I'm hungry. You think we can make a small food run on the way?"
Tails chuckled, telling him "Sure thing", with the four heading off afterward.
This left the Master Emerald saddened. "No, not again...!" it anxiously shouted, crying to itself in loneliness.

Big walked up into another room closeby, with a view of the Master Emerald. "No, this isn't it, either" he said, growing more disappointed with the prospect of missing the largest frog-based convention of the year. Pointing out the large green gem ahead, the purple cat suggested "Come on, Froggy, let's go ask that green guy for directions".

Team Dark continued their search, stopping in a grassy area as Shadow asked "How close are we to the next one, Omega?"
The robot pointed forward. "Two Chaos Emeralds approaching fast".
"Well, well," Rouge said with a satisfactory tone, "I didn't know jewels liked me back. Perhaps I should marry one".
As Sonic's group approached, the blue hedgehog replied "Oh, Knuckles already tried; seems like an unhealthy relationship to me".
"I will actually kill you" Knuckles told him, clearly unamused.
Shadow shifted position as he addressed the group, saying "So you've been after the Chaos Emeralds, as well".
Sonic affirmed his speculation before adding "We were meaning to find you to team up against the clones".
"I detected your emerald before we got here" Tails informed the

other three. "I take it you know the danger you'll be in without one".

After Shadow confirmed the situation, Amy asked "Since we have the same mission, do you wanna join us?"

"Well you know what they say, 'There's strength in numbers'" the bat girl answered, open to the idea.

Omega then pointed out "At least until the climax, when most of us will merely be observers to the battle, wishing we could be the ones up there crushing our opponents into dust".

Tails, only slightly disturbed by Omega's violent philosophical musing, said "Uh-...huh, sure" in response as he hoped that *he* wouldn't be crushed into dust someday.

"Alright, so it's settled" Sonic declared. With a friendly grin, he told Team Dark "Nice to be working together".

Knuckles was just as enthused to be working together, shouting "Yeah! Team Knuckles Galactic, go!" with pumped-up excitement.

The blue hedgehog promptly shot him down. "That's immediately banned as a team name".

"Aw..." the red one sadly stated, hanging his head in disappointment.

CHAPTER 8: AMBUSH

Our heroes ventured forth, looking for the next Chaos Emerald and were making good ground. Unfortunately for them, they were being preyed upon by those they were trying to stop.

"Doctor!" Clone Knuckles alerted his fellows as they hid behind a wall. "Our foes have arrived, knowing nothing of our insidious plot".

Feeling the urge to monologue, Clone Shadow began to say "And upon this field of battle, we shall-"

"Yeah, shut up" Eggman interrupted. Addressing his creations, he

told them "As long as we follow the plan, we'll be walking out of here *much* more powerful. Are you ready?"
"Yes, indeed" Clone Knuckles responded.
Clone Shadow promised "I shan't fail you, my lord".
Looking forward to a fight, Clone Sonic said "Oh, I'm *always* ready" with a smirk.
Delighted that the scheme was coming together, Eggman happily replied "Good, good..." And with that, they made their way toward Sonic's group.

Walking along together, Knuckles was sharing his thoughts on a wholesome subject with his friends. He asked "So you know what else you can use a sink for?"
"Knuckles' gross-ass diatribes aside," Sonic said as he decided to change the subject, "how close are we to the next one?"
"Chaos Emerald signal coming in faint, location unknown" Omega reported.
Suddenly, Eggman and the clones made their presence known. The mad scientist sarcastically told them all "Oh, you won't have to worry about that for much longer!"
That put the heroes on guard. "Eggman!" Shadow exclaimed.
The doctor joyfully replied "In the flesh!", adding "I really must thank you, Tails and Omega, for leading me on the path to the next emerald. Saves a lot of time and effort".
Surprised, Tails questioned "You knew where we were going? But how?"
"Aside from spying on you? Oh, just a little bit of hacking" the fat man explained. Directing his attention specifically to the fox, he continued "That information you had on the multiverse also sounded very intriguing, Tails; now once I find the emeralds, I can

use it to take over multiple worlds!" before laughing maniacally. Readying himself, Sonic defiantly challenged his nemesis with a question. "What makes you so sure you'll get the chance?"
"I'll have a pretty good head-start..." answered Eggman. Calling upon his copied creations, he shouted "NOW!", and the fight was on.

Sonic and co. were able to put up a good fight, but the clones had proven themselves powerful enough to gain the upper hand. The blue hedgehog's doppelganger thunderously kicked him and Tails to the ground. Clone Shadow sent the original and Rouge flying with a rapid attack of his own. Knuckles and Omega were bested by the duplicate echidna's swooping glide attacks.
Amy was the last one of the group standing, their Chaos Emeralds near her.
Sonic called out " Amy, our emeralds! Take them to safety!"
"Right!" the pink hedgehog nodded, scooping up the gems and running with them until Eggman blocked her path, flying in the hedgehog's way with the Eggmobile and staring her down.
As he confronted her, the evil doctor asked "And just *where* do you think you're going?"
"Don't come any closer!" Amy warned him, summoning her Piko Piko Hammer to make the point clear.
Eggman scoffed. "You think you can beat me?"
"One-on-one?" the hedgehog girl taunted him back. "You bet".
"Aren't *you* in for a surprise" the scientist stated pompously. He expounded "Running away with the emeralds might be keeping them safe from me, but it's making Sonic, Shadow, and Knuckles weaker the further you go. By my estimation, you're more of a hindrance to the team than a helper". With a trick up his sleeve,

Eggman told her "You say you could beat me one-on-one? Perhaps" before a grin formed on his face, ready to make the reveal. "But you haven't accounted for the fact that you're surrounded".
Amy sharply turned around to see the three clones standing closeby, reacting with a shocked "What?!"
With the distraction, the fat man was able to use a tractor beam in the Eggmobile to take the Chaos Emeralds she had been protecting, insultingly saying "Thanks for the gifts, Amy! You really are useless, aren't you?" before he and the clones made their exit, the doctor laughing all the while.
"No!" the pink girl frustratedly yelled out. "Get back here!"
Her attention then turned to Tails, who called out for her. "Amy, come quick!" he beckoned.
The feeling of guilt she'd been trying to suppress came rushing back. Letting out a quiet "Sonic..." in concern, she hurried along to help her friends.

CHAPTER 9: REGROUPING

The band of heroes managed to find a safe place to regain their bearings, but for the three being sapped of their strength, they were on their last legs. The energy drain had them needing to rest badly.
"How are you holding up, Shadow?" Rouge asked her friend.
Shadow answered "Exhausted, in pain, irritated...I think getting hit by a train would be preferable to how I'm feeling right now".
Sarcastically, the bat replied "Bright and sunny as usual, I see" before turning to Knuckles. "Knucky, how about you?"
Clearly feeling the worst of it, the echidna had started hallucinating. He groaned in pain before calling out "Emmy...Emmy, are you there? I need your warm embrace..."

"Aaaand that's where I'll draw the line" Rouge told them in concern, placing her hands on her hips, adding "You two boys go get some rest; save the strength that you have".

The feelings of concern were multiplied for Amy, especially as she saw Sonic standing in thought, looking to be so low on gas; it was a sight she hadn't really seen before. He was always able to catch a second wind, but this time, that wouldn't come without an emerald fueling him. On the way over to their improvised shelter, he could hardly walk, let alone run. The thoughts of that, along with the guilt from the encounter with Eggman, stirred in the hedgehog girl's head as she approached. "Sonic?" she softly spoke to get his attention.

"Yeah, Amy?"

With a deep breath, the pink girl told him "I- I'm sorry". Looking to the floor and back to him, she said "Losing the emeralds...it's all my fault".

"Hey, don't worry," Sonic encouraged her, "you were outnumbered against really strong opponents. You'll get your chance, Amy, and we'll get those emeralds back".

Amy was surprised by how confident Sonic sounded. Here he was, barely able to stand, still as optimistic as ever. Still, she had her doubts, admitting "I dunno how, at least with me on the team. Running with the emeralds weakened you, I let Eggman slip away with them..." Looking to her friend wistfully, she expressed her fears. "Maybe he was right to say I'm useless, a hindrance..."

It was a truly saddening thing to hear, the blue hedgehog not knowing she'd carried such regret when she had nothing to be remorseful for. "That's not true, Amy" he replied in a sympathetic tone. Taking it upon himself, he began to give her the pep-talk she

needed. "Remember: your worth isn't just how good you do in fights. If you want my take, I think you're one of the most important parts of the crew".

"How so?" asked Amy.

"You're kinda like the emotional support for everyone" Sonic explained. "As far as I've seen, when any one of us are having a bad day, you're one of the first ones we'd talk to. You've got just an *impeccable* sense of understanding people; I thought I knew that before but after we started hanging more, I think I really get what that means". As an example, he asked her a question. "Remember when you turned Gamma and Shadow around?" After getting a positive answer, he made his point by saying "That's what I'm talking about. You see the very best in people, and you're so good at it that they can't help but appreciate it a lot. You don't give up on others, Amy". With that same sympathetic tone from earlier, he followed up with "I just hope you aren't giving up on yourself..." to show he cared.

"But...you told me before this all started that you were appreciating all the time you had been spending with us. Aren't you scared that it might come to an end?" Amy inquired, still feeling responsible for what happened.

"Well sure, but that's the risk that you've gotta take when you're doing this kind of stuff" Sonic answered. "It might come to an end, yes, but that doesn't make the fond memories any less special".

"Sonic, I- I..." Amy was astounded by his bravery. Thinking about it more, it was exactly the spark she needed. What happened couldn't be changed, but it wasn't her fault. With a sense of appreciation, she said to him "Thank you. So much. Your faith and optimism...i- it means a lot".

Sonic gave a thumbs-up as he responded "Anytime, Amy".

"Do you have a plan?" the pink girl wondered.
Knowing his condition would only slow down their efforts, he admitted "I don't think I'll have the energy to be a part of the search; I can feel myself getting weaker". As much as it hurt him to say, the blue one had to come to grips with their situation. "I think Knuckles, Shadow, and I are gonna have to stay behind".
"I'll make sure someone's looking after you while I'm out there" Amy promised him.
"Thanks, Amy".
"No problem" she responded. As she began to leave, the pink hedgehog looked back to him, declaring "And Sonic, I promise I won't let you down".
Sonic assured her "You never have" with a smile on his face. "Please give Tails the news. And good luck; I'll see you soon".
"See you soon, Sonic" Amy replied warmly before departing.

Outside, Tails had just finished implementing some fixes to Omega. "That should do the trick" the fox observed as he booted up the robot.
"System update successful," Omega stated as part of an automated message, "would you like to hear about new product offerings from GUN Software?"
The yellow boy bemoaned "I hate how you can't turn this part off..." before skipping to get the machine back up and running.
"Systems online" Omega reported as Amy approached them.
The pink hedgehog asked "How's it coming along, Tails?"
"I added a few layers of protection to my radar and Omega here," Tails replied, "so now if Eggman tries to hack them again, they'll send back a fake signal to misdirect him". Dusting off his hands, he stated "We should be good to go. How's Sonic?"

"He said he was getting too weak to go along" Amy informed the fox boy.
Rouge came upon the group, updating them on the other two. "Shadow and Knuckles are out of commission, too. Looks like it's just us".
Amy turned to the robot. "Omega, can you stay here and take care of their medical needs?" she requested.
"Yes. I will assist them" Omega confirmed. "First aid protocol initiated. Nurse Omega is here to fix your boo-boos".
"Much appreciated, Omega" Rouge told him.
Getting the bat and fox's attention, Amy said to them "Alright. Sonic, Shadow, and Knuckles are counting on us. You guys ready?"
Tails pumped his fists. "Ready, Amy!"
"I'm all set" Rouge responded, eager to find the emeralds.
The hedgehog girl then said "Let's get to it", leading the way as they ventured forth.

Meanwhile, Eggman's contingent made their way back to his base to make up their own strategy going forward.
"I thought we knew where the next one was, Doc" Clone Sonic impatiently stated.
"The signal they had was faint; it only gave us a vague idea," the doctor explained, "I imagine Tails has set up some kind of encryption by now, but that's nothing a little more hacking of my own can't solve". Using his technical know-how to dig in, he got a signal, not knowing of the fox's misdirection protocol. " Aha! There it is!"
"Let us make our way and continue our journey, my fellow compatriots" Clone Shadow said as his teammates started leaving. "Victory shall soon be at hand!"

Eggman peeked his head back through the doorway, asking "You comin' or what?" in a mildly annoyed manner.

CHAPTER 10: BIG BAD BEETLE BOTCH

In an underground safe haven, a group known as the Restoration houses its headquarters. With a purpose to protect the world and all its civillians from the forces of evil, the organization was dedicated to bringing only the best, most skilled, reliable, and honest of people into its ranks.

"Well, your application looks to be on the up-and-up, Mr. Behaveswell" cheerfully stated the Restoration's leader, Jewel the Beetle. "Welcome aboard!"

Suddenly, the door of her office swung open, making the organizer jump in fright. Amy's group stepped in, the pink hedgehog alertly informing her "Jewel, we need the Restoration's Chaos Emerald or else- ...you've gotta be kidding me".

Looking between the trio and her new hire, Jewel asked "What? It's only our newest recruit, Goodguy Behaveswell". Goodguy Behaveswell was, of course, three abandoned-looking, slightly broken Egg Pawns in a trenchcoat and hat.

"*Jewel*..." Tails said with a tone of disbelief, flying over and removing the Egg Pawns' shoddy disguise.

In terror, the beetle shrieked "WE'RE BEING INVADED" and hid under her desk.

Amy, Rouge, and Tails easily disposed of the Egg Pawns, Rouge pulling Jewel out of her hiding place afterward.

"So could we have the emerald? We've got a couple friends in serious trouble".

"Oh, sure," Jewel agreed, "and thank you for taking care of those robots. I really got tricked this time..."

"*We know*" the three responded, as it was an alarmingly-common occurence.
Amy then inquired "Where are you guys keeping the Chaos Emerald?"
Jewel answered as she returned to her busywork. "I've left it in the care of-"
"MEEEEEE!" screamed the voice of Tangle the Lemur, bouncing her way into the office, continuing "TANGLE, TANGLE, I'M TANGLE-" only to be stopped when she looked upon a shiny object.
"Oooooooo...wait, where was I? Oh yeah! ME ME ME I'M TANGLLLLLLE!"
"Oh...great..." Rouge reacted with discomfort.
Swinging from the chandelier by her tail, Tangle told them "I've got it all super-duper-mega-dega-bippity-boppity secure with the Diamond Cutters! DIAMOND DIAMOND DIAMON-"
"Yeah, Tangle, that's very nice" Amy worked to calm the exciteable one down. "Can you take us to it?"
"Yup yup yup yup yuuuuuuuup!" The lemur jumped down, leading the three to the Diamond Cutters' quarters, walking as though she were leading a parade.

Upon arrival, Tangle rapidly moved around Whisper the Wolf, greeting her with a "HI WHISPER" at every movement, despite the wolf's requests to stop, as well as the fact they'd only been apart for a few minutes.
"Hey there, Whisper," the yellow fox said to his friend, "we're looking for the Chaos Emerald you guys are holding on to".
Presenting them with a box, opening it and revealing the purple gem inside, Whisper stated "Here. Jewel let me know" in her typical hushed tone.

"Thanks so much" Amy gratefully told her, taking the emerald.
"Sonic's in danger. Knuckles and Shadow, too. It really means a lot".
"Say," Rouge had an idea, "think you guys could help us out?"
"Can't" Whisper simply responded.
"Oh yeah!" Tangle stopped running around in circles to jump up on the wolf girl's shoulders and explain "Lanolin was scowling at everything like usual when she got her brush caught in her hair and her zippers caught in her hair and her belt caught in her-"
Whisper looked up at her and pointed out "You distracted her. She fell down the stairs getting dressed".
"And got everything caught in her hair!" the grey lemur said, sounding proud to have added even the slightest detail to the story.
"So we're gonna be busy getting it all out".
Tails blinked, unaware of how to take this information. "I...see..."
"On second thought, it sounds like you'd be better suited here" Rouge told them, regretting having asked.
Amy added "Well, thanks again for the emerald and we'll catch up with you soon. Later!" before she and the other two left.
Whisper picked Tangle up and held the lemur in front of her, saying "Calm down in front of guests".

CHAPTER 11: NEVER MEET YOUR IDOLIZERS

It wasn't long after that Tails picked up another emerald signal, he and his two friends racing to its location. The area the gem was in looked dilapidated, the people all around appearing angry and perpetually displeased, and the faint smell of sweaty socks persisted in the air.
"Spooky place they've got here..." Rouge commented apprehensively.
The two-tailed fox replied "Oh, it is. Doesn't look pleasant, but it's

where the tracker says the next emerald is".
Looking around diligently, Amy spotted their prize. "There it is!" she alerted the others, pointing it out.
The three then approached. A rather lanky man was carrying the grey emerald as he argued with someone else about something pointless, nothing said between them being worth remembering.
The pink hedgehog cut in. "Excuse me-"
"AMY ROSE?" the man turned around, along with anyone else within earshot. "My name's Aiden, I am your biggest fan! It's an honor to meet you! But...why did you politely say 'Excuse me'?"
Amy was confused, answering "Because I needed your attention...?" with a puzzled expression on her face.
"No, no, no, that's all wrong!" Aiden told her, sounding ever more annoyed. "Here, uh...Tails said he doesn't think you and Sonic will get together".
Crossing her arms, Amy said "Well, Tails is free to have his own opinion, but you really shouldn't be putting words in other peoples' mouths-"
"WHY AREN'T YOU YELLING AT HIM FOR NO REASON?!" whined the thin man. "THAT'S WHAT YOU DO, along with always pining over Sonic, of course, THAT'S WHAT MAKES YOU COOL! STOP RUINING IT FOREVER! Also you don't love people enough".
"Because I'm not a jerk," Amy sternly defended herself, "why would they be my friends if I was constantly berating them? And why would you complain about me not loving enough if you want me to be rude?" Calming a bit, she informed him "Look, we need that emerald; Knuckles, Shadow, and Sonic could be taking their last breath if-"
"Breathing?!" Another denizen of this strange land freaked out. "I always knew Sonic was a motormouth!"

Yet another chimed in "She's right about Tails, though; he should always be nice and happy all the time!" as she grabbed the fox, asking him "Isn't that right?"

"Get away from me" Tails responded, making the girl recoil and screech in shock.

"And you," Aiden pointed his attention to Rouge, "why aren't you eating loads of McDonald's and talking very specifically about how round and squishy it makes you? That's what you're known for, after all".

"What kind of Kentucky Fried Cringe have you been reading about me?" Rouge rhetorically asked with disgust.

"HEY," yet another one of the townsfolk marched up to the scene, "Aiden, you slime; Amy's *mine* to chastise for not being as bitchy as I want her to be!"

"Ugh, shut UP, Elaine!" Aiden responded. "You're just mad because you aren't her!"

"You both rubbed off your MEAN on Tails!" the fox's fangirl screamed.

Elaine cracked her knuckles. "What'cha gonna do about it, Gwen? Huh?"

"I am also a part of this!" the one complaining about Sonic needlessly reminded everyone around.

Soon enough, the bickering led to the crowd throwing punches with one another, the emerald landing at the heroes' feet.

"Should we try to intervene...?" Amy asked as Tails picked up the gem.

The bat girl shook her head, explaining "They're clearly never gonna learn".

"Yeah," the yellow fox agreed, "let's just get outta here silently while we still can".

The three quickly fled, setting a course for the next emerald.
As the fight died down, the people of this land of instability took notice. "Hey, wait..." Aiden said. "They're gone! Who are we gonna yell at for being wrong now?"
"NOOOOO!" one in particular cried. "I wanted to ask them if I could meet Cream!"

CHAPTER 12: HERE, KITTY

Deep in a woodland area at the base of a giant tree, the Chaotix Detective Agency were making preparations for a rescue operation, each of the three members playing an important part.
Vector the Crocodile, leader of the group, instructed his teammates. "Alright, boys; she should be around this area somewhere. I'll look on the ground. Espio, climb the trees".
The purple chameleon was immediately suspicious of this plan. "This isn't gonna be another scheme to make me do all the work, is it-"
"Charmy, you got the donuts?" the crocodile questioned as he turned to the boy.
Charmy answered "Got 'em!" excitedly as he gave a thumbs-up.
"Figures..." Espio muttered to himself.
Just as the carefully-planned mission was about to proceed, Amy's group entered the scene.
"Hey guys," the hedgehog girl greeted them, "how are you?"
"It could be better, not gonna lie" admitted Vector, who crossed his arms and shook his head. He further explained "First some hooligans ruined my girlfriend's family picnic..."
Rouge sheepishly responded "Oh no, wonder who could've done that..."
"And I can't even be there for her because we got a mission to

rescue a cat from one of these trees" the green one bemoaned.
Amy curiously asked "Isn't that the firefighters' job?"
"You'd think it would be," Espio replied, "but it seems everyone just sees the word 'detective' in our business name and assumes we do everything".
The young bee added "And the pay's not even usually that great. You know what we got last time for defusing a bomb? A small square of carpet. How are we supposed to live off *that*?"
"Sounds rough" Tails opined.
Charmy matter-of-factly told him "It is" before happily stating "Which makes it fun to rub on Espio's head".
"Next time you do that, it's no video games for a week" Espio warned the bee.
Charmy returned the warning with a serious-toned "Sometimes sacrifices need to be made".
"Things might not be great right now but I try to look on the bright side" Vector pointed out. "At least we're getting a Chaos Emerald for this one".
That certainly caught the attention of Amy's contingent, Rouge inquiring "A Chaos Emerald, you say?"
"We've been looking all over for those" Tails informed the Chaotix.
Coming up with an idea, Amy offered "Tell you what, we'll take up your mission for the Chaos Emerald so that you can get back to your girlfriend, Vector".
Thrilled with the idea of not having to work, the crocodile joyfully replied "Sounds good to me", happy to get some relaxation time.
In a sing-song fashion, Charmy teased "Vector and Vanilla, sitting in a tree-"
"Oh, quiet you" Vector defensively retorted, telling the bee "And bring the donuts along" as he started to walk away.

The other Chaotix following their leader, Espio asked "Can I have one of those?"
With the detectives gone, Amy turned to her teammates, saying "Okay guys, now that we've got our mission, let's fly up there".
The other two met her with an enthusiastic "Yeah!" before leaping up and taking to the skies...forgetting something important.
"With me!" the pink hedgehog beckoned to them.
A little embarrassed, Tails said "Right, sorry" as he and Rouge touched back down to pick her up.

Up the three went, looking around for the feline in need of help.
Landing upon a couple thick branches, they noticed a familiar figure.
"Honey?" Amy asked in surprise.
Tails questioned "You were the missing cat?"
"Oh, hi!" Honey the Cat called to them. A bit ditzy, she commented "You sounded a lot different on the phone, Tails".
Rouge clarified "Actually, the guys you called had a personal thing come up".
"So we're doing the job for them" Amy pointed out.
Nodding, Honey said "Ah, I see" before taking notice of the pink girl's apparel. "Love the outfit, by the way".
"Well hey, you make good stuff!" Amy complimented the fashion designer. "But that's not important right now; we need the Chaos Emerald you've got. Our friends are in real danger".
Understanding the situation, the yellow cat replied "By all means, have it" as she handed them the cyan emerald. The three thanked her, to which she responded "No problem at all! Thanks for coming to save me" gratefully.
"How'd you get stuck up here, anyway?" Amy asked.
Feeling silly, Honey confessed "Oh, it really is embarrassing. I was

chasing a butterfly".
Rouge comfortingly told her "Well you're in good hands now" before adding "Just try to be a little more careful next time, okay?"
"Will do!" the cat promised. Suddenly remembering something, she requested "Oh, and please let Sonic know his special order will be done real soon!"
Amy's curiosity was piqued. "Special order?"
"He'll know what I mean" the cat girl assured her. Walking toward the three, Honey told them "Anyway, thanks again-" before slipping from the tree branch with a yelp, much to the surprise of her rescuers. After a loud thump, she declared "I'm okay!" to them.
Relieved to have not witnessed death by their shock-induced hesitance, Amy sighed out "Oh thank god".
"Well, that's three emeralds" Tails said, suggesting "We should make our way back".
The other two nodded in agreement, Rouge reaching for her communicator. "Omega, status report".
The robot described Sonic, Shadow, and Knuckles' condition, stating "All three patients currently unconscious. Time is of the essence".
"Just hang in there and do what you can, Omega. We'll be back there soon" the bat directed. "Rouge out".
"Good work, guys" Amy encouraged the bat and fox. Their retrieval mission complete, she told her teammates "Let's get back to the others", the three hurriedly rushing to their friends' aid.

CHAPTER 13: RECOVERY

While our heroes raced to help their friends, Eggman and the clones were dealing with an onset of frustration, having been outsmarted and only now realizing it.
"That's the third false signal we've gotten," the doctor shouted,

"Tails must've done something to throw us off!"
Clone Knuckles scratched his chin, commenting "An unfortunate development, indeed".
Speaking and gesturing dramatically, Clone Shadow said "Alas, my fellows, we have been outsmarted by our adversaries and if we fail to act in haste, it shall be our downfall!", holding what he believed to be an appropriately melancholic pose.
"That must mean they got three more emeralds" Clone Sonic told his creator.
"And are probably using them on Sonic, Shadow, and Knuckles as we speak" Eggman added. With a sense of urgency, trying to maintain control of the situation, he directed "The energy drain will probably stall soon, so get as much as you can. Even if they get back on their feet, you'll still be more powerful than they are".
Sonic's copy pointed out "So we should find the seventh emerald to give us another boost", looking ready to face off once more with his foe.
"Precisely" the fat man confirmed. "I'll use my own technology to find it and once that happens, we'll dispose of them for good and impose our will on the multiverse!"

Elsewhere, Amy, Tails, and Rouge had gotten back to the others just in the nick of time, giving them a Chaos Emerald to recover and recharge.
"Hey there, sleepyhead" the bat girl cooed to Shadow. "Feeling any better?"
"Much better" the black hedgehog confirmed, adjusting his glove.

Tails was having a slightly more difficult time. "Wakey-wakey, Knuckles" he called out.

The red boy turned over, attempting to sleep. He replied "Five more minutes!" like a child not wanting to go to school.
Tails rolled his eyes, complaining "Oh, come on..." to himself.
Getting an idea, he looked back to the echidna. "Knuckles, I got you some grapes".
"GIMME MY GRAPES" Knuckles excitedly sprung up, the anticipation of eating his favorite snack jolting him awake.
Mission successful, the fox matter-of-factly told the other "Good, you're awake. Come with me" and started walking off.
Slowly following along, the seasoned warrior longingly asked "G-grapes...?"

"Sonic..." Amy asked with care in her voice, "are you alright?"
The blue hedgehog gave her a confident "Yup" and told the pink girl "I knew you could do it, Amy. Thanks".
"Thank *you* for believing in me" Amy said to him in relief.
"No prob". With a smile and thumbs-up, the blue hedgehog encouraged her by saying "Eggman can't call you 'useless' now".
A giggle escaped from Amy's lips, her typical bubbly attitude returning, cheerfully saying "Got that right!" before suddenly remembering something she'd been told earlier. "Oh yeah, Honey said something about a special order being done soon?"
Sonic nervously laughed, a flush finding its way to his face. "Oh, uh, good to know" the blue hedgehog sheepishly said. Deciding the subject needed changing before Amy could figure out what Honey meant, Sonic declared "I'm just gonna...call a meeting" before running out of the room.

"He didn't have any grapes..." Knuckles complained as he and Tails made their way to everyone else.

"Knuckles, the multiverse is at stake" the fox boy pointed out. "You can have grapes later".

Sonic sarcastically asked "Did he try to sell you on his TV package, too?"

"It's a good deal!" Tails defensively responded.

"Anyway, it's time we up our game" the blue hedgehog addressed his friends. "Eggman might've stolen the first three emeralds but we've made a comeback and there's one more left. If we get it, we can send them packing. If not, then it's all over". His look of seriousness softened, showing the proudness he had in his companions. "But we're not gonna let that happen because we've got the best team of heroes the world could ask for. Ready to rain on Eggman's parade?"

"Yeah!" the group shouted as they pumped their fists, with the exception of Omega saying "Affirmative" because he's a real robot's robot.

"And I am, too!" Sonic enthusiastically shouted, invigorating the others. Turning to his best friend, the blue boy asked "Tails, do you have a lock on the emerald?"

Tails confirmed with a nod. "I do, but it is far from here so we'll have to hurry".

"Then there's no time to waste" observed Sonic, telling the others "Let's rock and roll!" with determination.

CHAPTER 14: SHOWDOWN

"I dunno if we're gonna make it this year, Froggy" Big said with concern as he walked along with his pollywog pal. "But let's keep looking around, just in case".

As they left the cavernous area, Eggman's contingent soon arrived, the gaggle of villains looking very intent on finding their treasure.

"The emerald's somewhere in this area. Spread around and look for it before Sonic and his friends show up" the evil scientist ordered, to a collective "Yes, sir!" from his servants.

Before they could look, however, their opponents sped in to confront them.

Sonic quipped "Bit late for that, Eggman".

"Oh, wonderful" said Eggman, sarcastically. "You little pests might've tricked me, but the last emerald is ours! I mean, we were here first, after all" he pointed out.

"Dibs" the blue hedgehog immediately blurted.

The doctor looked at him with disdain. "Oh wow, really mature, Sonic".

Clone Sonic pointed to his counterpart, telling him "Too bad for you, we don't respect dibs", truly showing what kind of evil our heroes were up against.

Sonic met him with a cocky expression, asking "Looks like we'll just have to have a good old-fashioned showdown then, huh?"

Clone Shadow scoffed. "A challenge? Ha! Might I remind you of our last battle? You'll only be meeting your end should you partake in-"

"Faker!" the black hedgehog interrupted, leaving his doppelganger confused. Shadow explained "Don't mind me, I needed to get that one out".

"While dramatic, my colleague is very much correct," Clone Knuckles observed, "your odds of victory are considerably lower than ours".

Knuckles responded strongly to that statement, saying "We might be odd, but we'll take you down!" He didn't quite get it, but he had the right spirit.

Sonic boasted "We like defying the odds anyway" before changing his expression to a more casual one. "So uh, yeah, can we fight

now?" he asked in a laid-back manner.
"Yeah, I'm good for that" Clone Sonic said in a similarly-relaxed tone.
Eggman offhandedly replied "Oh yes, carry on" before resetting the mood. "GET THEM!" he commanded of his troops.

Both sides converged, trading blows with one another in fast-paced combat. Sonic, Knuckles, and Shadow were able to keep up with their counterparts, the boost from the emeralds they held keeping them in the fight. The others helped spot and strike the clones, though they were no pushovers, delivering strong hits where and whenever they could. Eventually, the action split off into three groups.

"Take..." Amy started to say as she jumped in the air, hammer raised, slamming it down at Clone Sonic as she shouted "this!"
"Missed me!" the speedy copy mocked as he quickly Spin Dashed to avoid her maneuver. As he saw the pink hedgehog swiftly try once more, he jumped over her swing and teased "Missed me again!"
However, in his gloating, he made himself unaware to the fact that Tails was in prime position to deliver a kick, knocking him down.
The young fox tried to follow up with a tail-swipe, but Clone Sonic moved just in time to avoid it, running off. "Sonic, look out!" Tails warned.
"Down you go!" the blue hedgehog exclaimed as he hit his doppelganger with a Homing Attack, quickly charging a Spin Dash of his own and releasing, with Clone Sonic jumping clear right in the nick of time.

Omega, always willing to deal some damage, set his sights. "Target

locked" he proclaimed, switching out his hands for built-in turrets. As soon as he said "Fire", a rain of bullets came from him, stopping only when he was certain he got his man.
...Unfortunately, it was Shadow who was struck by the projectiles, bleeding in three places. "Omega, you shot me!" he politely complained after being fired upon by his friend.
The robot withdrew his weapons, replying "My bad".
"You're lucky I can heal with this thing" Shadow grumbled as he used his emerald's power to mend his wounds.

Knuckles, paired one-on-one with his clone, heroically called out "Have a knuckle sandwich!" before he and his clone threw a punch, hitting each other's fists. "Ow," the echidna original griped, "well, how about a faceful of fist?" Once again, the two connected right at the knuckles, no pun intended. Knuckles whined "Ooooww..." even longer than he had the first time.
Clone Knuckles decided to take advantage of the situation, feigning concern as he pointed behind his opponent. "Goodness gracious, what's that in the distance?"
Knuckles turned around, saying "I don't see anything-" before being jabbed in the back and sent flying, the clone grabbing his Chaos Emerald as he was knocked away.

"You may have the advantage in numbers," Clone Shadow acknowledged as Team Dark surrounded him, "but I haveth an unforeseen trick up my sleeve!"
"And what's that?" challenged Rouge, before the clone hedgehog subsequently used his natural ability to teleport via Chaos Control. Shadow, feeling foolish, admitted "Yeah, I should've seen that coming" before his double appeared again to kick him away, doing

the same with Rouge and Omega as he swiped the black hedgehog's emerald.

Both Sonics leapt toward one another, the clone landing a kick to the original's mid-section, sending him down to the ground.
Amy and Tails yelled out "Sonic!" in concern as they saw their friend land.
Clone Sonic then began to charge himself up, spinning in place until he was glowing with energy. "Ready..." he stated, waiting for his counterpart to stand up, shouting "GO!" before hitting Sonic, Tails, and Amy with a Light Speed Attack, the former dropping his Chaos Emerald in the process, which the grey look-alike quickly picked up and ran away with.

"Here they are, Doctor" Clone Sonic told his creator as he and the other two copies handed over the Chaos Emeralds.
Eggman let out an evil laugh in excitement, saying "Yes, yes! Just one more and the multiverse will be ours!" Looking toward the group of heroes gathering together, he asked "How does it feel, Sonic, to know I beat you twice?" in derision.
The blue hedgehog replied "You haven't won yet, Eggman" as he got to his feet, standing defiant despite the odds being stacked against him and his friends.
"Oh, but I have," the evil scientist declared, "the clones are taking power from *six* emeralds now; you can already feel yourself getting weaker again, can't you? As much as you want to be optimistic, you know you can't stop the energy drain. NO ONE will be able to stop me-"
But just then, Big rushed to the scene. It was the fastest anyone had seen the large cat move. Finger pointed out in front of him, the

feline's voice boomed "Froggy, use Chaos Control now!"
The amphibian let out a croak, revealing he and Big possessed the yellow Chaos Emerald, using it to freeze time and swipe the other six from Eggman's crew, giving the rest to Sonic's bunch as they restored time.
"What the-" Eggman said, startled, shouting "*HE* found the last emerald?!" in surprise once it became clear to him what had happened.
Sonic thanked Big, to which the cat responded "You're welcome! I can't stay, though; Froggy and I gotta get to Frogapalooza before it's too late".
"Big, that's *next* week. Remember?" Amy reminded him.
Big, realizing his miscalculation, simply said "Oh yeah...bye-bye!" before leaving with Froggy in tow.
Knuckles, Shadow, and Sonic took the opportunity to use the Chaos Emeralds' power. With a glowing light, they transformed into their super forms, giving them a much-needed rise in energy.
"Looks like it's time for us to finish this" Sonic told the three clones.
Clone Sonic responded by stating "Don't speak so soon", he and the other two also utilizing their own super forms. "We can still use the emeralds, too".
Thinking quickly, Eggman began inputting commands at the console of the Eggmobile, challenging the powered-up heroes as he announced "We'll see how your super forms last once I send you to another universe!"
"Not so fast!" exclaimed Tails, moving to stop the doctor's scheme. He jumped in the air and delivered a tail-swipe to the Eggmobile's controls, causing them to go haywire.
Seeing that something was about to go wrong, Eggman panicked. "Tails, no! Now the machine will-" he tried to warn everyone, but

before he could, the six superpowered combatants disappeared, "...keep randomly sending all of them to other universes" the doctor finished his sentence.
"Huh..." Tails expressed his astonishment, "y'know, attacking you with reckless abandon usually works for Sonic".
"There's a fine art to it, Tails" explained Eggman.
Concerned for the safety of her friends, Amy asked "Can you get them back?"
"Yeah, it shouldn't be a problem" the evil scientist answered. In a relaxed, casual, and friendly tone, he turned to the yellow fox and requested "Tails, help me out, would ya?"
"On it!" Tails told him, both geniuses getting to work on retrieving their comrades.

In the Warp of Confusion, Dr. Warpnik was lamenting a great loss.
"I miss that blue lady..." the insane scientist bemoaned, shrieking in frustration.
A flash then occurred, Knuckles and Clone Knuckles appearing, which caused Warpnik to shriek in delight.
"Oh, goody!" the psychopath shouted excitedly. "More blue ladies!"
Clone Knuckles then asked "Could you tell us where we are, my good man?"
Instead of giving them an actual answer, Warpnik shouted "FISH!" and proceeded to shove a fish down his esophagus, muffling his speech afterward on account of the aquatic creature in his throat.
Amidst their confusion, both echidnas were warped away from the scene, Warpnik screeching in sorrow at losing someone to talk to yet again.

Meanwhile, an argument had been brewing between members of

the Freedom Fighters, which felt as though it'd been going on for years.

"Become my wife, princess," beckoned Geoffrey St. John as he gestured toward an unmarked white van, "your chariot awaits. Also I was created by Ken Penders".

"Dude, aren't you like 20 years old?" the Sonic of this universe questioned.

The skunk could only nervously say "UH..." in response.

The blue boy turned his glance to the monarch the two were pining over, suggesting "C'mon, Sal, ditch this creep and get together with me".

"Well..." Princess Sally Acorn pondered, but only until Shadow and his clone transported to their location. "*You're* my boyfriends now!" she decreed, running up to them, hearts practically in her eyes.

Shadow looked confused, uttering "What the fu-" before he and Clone Shadow vanished.

Sally dropped to her knees and bawled. She cried "THEY BROKE UP WITH MEEEEEE...!"

The blue hedgehog then started to beat Geoffrey senseless.

In a desolate land known as The Grim, a boy genius named Nine watched on from the top of a large tower as a long and dragged-out war raged on the grounds below.

"URGH" the boy grunted in irritation, looking upon the nearly-complete Paradox Prism. He noted "I need Sonic's energy!" for what felt like the eighth time in the span of a few minutes when both Sonics materialized in the lab. Impressed by their super forms, Nine mused "A golden Sonic and greyscale collector's edition variant? This should be *way* more powerful!" and grabbed one of their Chaos Emeralds.

Knowing the emeralds were connected at various points in the multiverse and probably shouldn't be tampered with, Sonic warned "Hey, uh, I wouldn't mess with that-"
"YOU DON'T TELL ME WHAT TO DO!" yelled the fox, shoving the emerald in the Paradox Prism's empty slot. He was subsequently violently electrocuted and fell to the floor, presumably dead.
The Sonics stared awkwardly before the original grabbed his emerald back.
Sonic told the other "...Let's agree to never talk about this".
"Yeah, that sounds good" the grey clone agreed, both teleporting away right afterward.

With another bright flash, all six displaced combatants returned to their rightful place.
"Oh cool, it worked" Tails noted. "Nice job, Eggman".
Shaking hands with the fox, the evil doctor complimented "You too, Tails".
Rouge then asked "How was it in the multiverse?" with curiosity.
"Very, *very* weird" responded Knuckles, looking glad to be anywhere other than the Warp of Confusion.
The clone echidna opined "I concur with my intellectually-challenged counterpart; it was most strange".
Amy, still showing concern, inquired "Was it scary at all?"
"Our venture into multiple realities was frightening indeed, m'lady" Clone Shadow replied, not remembering that ham is supposed to go in the fridge. "With the great challenge of returning home looming over us, we looked deep within ourselves to find the light in the darkness that filled our hopes".
Just about done with his copy's general demeanor, Shadow asked him "What the hell are you even on about?" in chagrin.

Sonic wondered aloud "Now that we're back home, how are we gonna end this fight?"
"I've got something in mind" Clone Sonic said with sinister intent. He chuckled and turned to the other two doppelganers, suggesting "Let's hit 'em with a Chaos Bomb".
Clones Knuckles and Shadow affirming with a "Right!", all three then took to the sky.
"Oh shit," Eggman reacted in a small panic, "lemme just get outta the way".
Clone Sonic shouted down to ground level, taunting "It was nice knowing you all, but your time is up!", he and his two cohorts charging up an energy ball that grew larger by the second, determined to throw it down upon the heroes' group.
"Sonic!" Looking to his best friend alertly, Tails informed him "While Eggman and I were working on getting you back, I did a little digging of my own into his files". The fox prodigy drew up strategy in his head and relayed it just as quick as it came to mind. "The clones need an even flow of energy from the Chaos Emeralds to sustain their super powers. If you focus on using the positive properties of the emeralds, their super forms should get really weak, and then you can reverse the energy-draining process".
Amy added "And you can draw from our positive energy, too, just like when you fought Chaos", reminded of the similarities of both adventures.
"That's perfect, no pun intended" Sonic replied, impressed with the yellow boy's digital sleuthing. "Good thinking, guys". The speedster directed his attention to Knuckles and Shadow, readily telling them "Let's go" before the trio flew upward to confront their duplicates.
"Try all you might, you can't stop us, Sonic!" warned Clone Sonic, confident that he and the other clones had this battle in the bag.

Sonic looked him in the eyes, furrowing his brow. He responded "That's where you're wrong" in a resolute tone. With an exclamation of "Now!", he, Shadow, and Knuckles began absorbing the positive energy of the Chaos Emeralds, making them glow brighter, the auras surrounding them becoming like raging balls of flame.

"Go get 'em, Sonic!" Tails cheered from below. "You've got this, Knuckles!"

Rouge joined in the encouragement, shouting "Show 'em what you're made of, Shadow!"

Omega then pondered "As a non-organic being, does my positivity count?", always one to be asking the real questions.

Amy held her hands together up to her chest with hope. "I believe in you, Sonic," she said to him, "just like you believed in me!"

Clone Sonic was caught by surprise, feeling himself getting weaker as the flow of energy surrounding him and his teammates slowed down. "Wha- what's going on?!"

"There's only one way they could've known about that..." Eggman noted as he began to deduce the happenings up above. Though out of earshot, he yelled "Hey, that's cheating! I thought we were bros, Tails; don't you believe in a fair fight? They need an *even* flow of energy; it's not like I can *negatively* believe in them to balance things out!"

Up high, the clones were struggling. "Keep it together...!" Clone Sonic directed to the others as they desperately tried to hold onto what they had left, but to no avail. Their opponents successfully took control of the energy ball and made it vanish before it could do any damage. "No! What happened?!" he asked in shock and frustration.

"Sorry to say, but you miscalculated," Sonic answered, "looks like

your time is up".
The three superpowered heroes then called out "CHAOS CONTROL!", all six fighters showered in light as the clones began to dissipate.
Clone Sonic found himself unable to do anything to stop it, bellowing "NOOOOOOO...!" as he and his fellows faded from existence.
Sonic, Shadow, and Knuckles touched back down, detransforming and letting the Chaos Emeralds scatter, now back to full health.
"You did it!" Tails jumped in joy.
Amy joyously said to them "Fantastic job, guys".
"Operation complete" Omega told the group. "Congratulations on a job well done".
Rouge stated "What a couple of studs, you were great out there!" as she looked upon them proudly.
"Hey now, cut yourselves some slack". The blue hedgehog reminded them "We couldn't have done it without you".
"You had our backs when we needed it the most. Thank you" said Knuckles gratefully.
Shadow couldn't ignore the feelings overcoming him. "I- I've never felt this good before...I love you guys!"
Giving a small laugh, Tails posited "Must be all the positive energy. You'll be back to normal soon".
Soon enough, Eggman flew back to them on the Eggmobile. He looked Sonic's way, conceding "Well Sonic, you've managed to foil yet another one of my plans" before stating "I hope you know I'll be back".
"And I hope you know I'll be waiting for ya" Sonic responded in kind.
Shifting demeanor, Eggman casually asked "What's good for you? Like around the 23rd?"

"Uuuhh, that whole week's kinda tricky, to be honest" Sonic told him as he thought it over.
"Ah, gotcha; we'll figure something out" the evil genius assured him of their next get-together. With a friendly-sounding farewell of "Toodles!", Eggman left the scene to come up with his next big plan.
"I dunno about you guys, but now that I'm back to full-strength, I feel like spreading some love and cheer" Shadow declared, frolicking off.
Rouge hailed "Shadow, wait! I can give you some tips for that!" before turning to her robot friend. "Come on, Omega, let's go catch up with him" she said.
"Affirmative" the robot agreed, he and the bat girl giving chase to Shadow.
"I should get back to the Master Emerald, see how it's doing" Knuckles informed the others that were left. "Take care!" he smiled and said in a friendly manner before he left.
Feeling recharged from his stamina returning, Sonic expressed his desire to use it. "And I think I'm gonna go on a bit of a run. Catch up with you guys later!" he said before zooming off.
Relieved at the fortunate outcome of their journey, Amy noted "Well, that closes the book on yet another adventure. Glad to see it all worked out in the end".
"Agreed" Tails replied. "If this doesn't convince them to ban Make Them Evil Juice, I dunno *what* will".
Amy concurred with a "Yeah" before suggesting "Say, since it's just us, is there anything in the lab you can show me, Tails?"
"Absolutely!" the yellow fox excitedly nodded, adding "There's plenty of stuff I've been working on, if you wanna have a look".
"Sounds good to me" the hedgehog girl happily told him.
Tails, eager to share his projects with a friend, said "Cool! Right this

way, Amy", and they both started making their way to the boy genius' lab.

CHAPTER 15: REFLECTION

Three days passed after Dr. Eggman and the clones were defeated, Amy returning to where the journey began for her and Sonic. As she gazed outward at the natural beauty of the ocean, none other but Sonic happened along to greet her.

"Hey there, Ames!" the blue boy enthusiastically spoke.

Amy turned around, giving him a friendly hello. "How are you feeling?" she asked, curious of his condition after battling with the clones.

Providing his update, Sonic was happy to report "All good on my end" before inquiring how she felt.

The pink hedgehog answered "I've been pretty great, as well" in a cheerful way. With a sense of respect and admiration, she followed up by telling him "I gotta thank you again, too; I thought I had screwed up everything, but you showed you still had confidence in me and that just...lifted a big weight off my shoulders".

"No prob, Amy," replied the speedy one, "I knew you had it in you all along; sometimes we just need a little boost, even me".

"I'll be there for you if you need it!" Amy quickly assured him.

Sonic met her with the confident smile she thought so charming as he said "That's something I always knew I could count on".

The hedgehog girl couldn't help but giggle, thanking him before remembering one of the details of the post-fight conversation. "Did you and Eggman set up your next encounter?"

"We're still working out the details" the blue one said offhandedly. "But like I said before, I enjoy the downtime a lot and plan on getting the most out of it. In fact, I was doing some more thinking

these last couple days".

"What about?" Amy asked curiously.

"Just how much I appreciate having you all around". Sonic looked at his surroundings, thoughts of his friends swirling in his mind. "We all come from different walks of life, and we've got our own ways of going about it, but when it comes down to the nitty-gritty, we really do look out for each other". Turning back to Amy, he told her "Gives me the feeling of having a big extended family" fondly.

What a sweetheart he could be, Amy felt, touched by how thoughtful his sentiments were. "I understand completely," she said softly, "it's nice to know you've got a bunch of people who care about you".

"Couldn't have said it better myself" the blue hedgehog complimented.

The pink one then optimistically pointed something out. "Plus, we're between Eggman schemes right now; having so many friends means you've got no shortage of people to spend some quality time with" she told him.

"True" the hedgehog boy agreed before a slick look appeared on his face. "But today, I had someone special in mind to do that with".

Amy immediately read the room and was all for it, replying "You know, Sonic, I was thinking the same thing and it sounds lovely. Shall we?" in an equally-sly manner.

Sonic nodded, remarking "Indeed" before the two hedgehogs walked off together, not knowing *what* they would do, but knowing it would be a lot of fun.

THE END